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Work is still continuing on a smaller scale to the west of the ziggurat. Plagued by the dual evils of Nippur, the deep Parthian cuts and the tremendous Hilprecht dump piles, we are continuing the search for a gateway in the western Ekur wall. Inshallah it will appear, and with it the possibility of finding at least one more magnificent Ur-Nammu foundation statue.

Of prime importance is the starting of a "Tiefgrabung." A deep pit is being dug for the purpose of determining the early stratigraphy of the Inanna precinct. Its location on the east side of the temple area, between it and the ziggurat, is most promising. Under the capable direction of our archaeologist, Donald Hansen, nine levels have already been determined down to a depth of four meters below the Ur III temple. Level IX appears to be pure Early Dynastic I. It remains to be seen just how thick this stratum will be. It is our great hope and expectation that we will find Jemdet Nasr, Uruk, and Obeid period remains below it. If so, it will be the first time that such early materials have been discovered in situ and recorded at Nippur.

Our object finds during the past month have been relatively few, but of excellent quality. They include a beautiful ivory nude female figurine, which puts many a modern pin-up to shame, dating possibly from the first half of the second millennium B.C., a finely worked and well preserved Early Dynastic III statue head of stone, half of an Early Dynastic II stone plaque with several new and interesting features, and a considerable number of fragments of Esarhaddon barrel-cylinders from which Prof. Goetze has been able to reconstruct almost the entire text. It describes Esarhaddon's building of the Inanna sanctuary.

Many problems still remain unsolved and we only hope that the remaining four weeks of our season will reveal the answers to some of them. The heavy digging of the first part of the season is over. For the remainder of our stay we will be working with a reduced labor force, clearing up as many of the finer points of the excavations as possible, before the unceasing flow of sand and dust buries the remains once again - this time perhaps for eternity.

George F. Dales, Fellow  
Baghdad School